

STATE OF IOWA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE:  AREA CODE 515 RELIEF PLAN	DOCKET NO. SPU-99-22
---	----------------------

**ORDER SCHEDULING ADDITIONAL PUBLIC MEETINGS  
AND ACKNOWLEDGING WITHDRAWAL OF INTERVENTION**

(Issued November 24, 1999)

On November 5, 1999, pursuant to IOWA CODE § 17A.14(4) (1999), the Utilities Board (Board) issued an order taking official notice of three possible area code split maps, attached to the order as Attachments A, B, and C. Attachments A and B are proposed two-way splits developed by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) prior to the telephone industry meeting that resulted in the industry recommendation for exhaustion relief in the 515 area code. Attachment C is a new map, prepared by NANPA and showing a possible three-way split of the 515 area code.

The concept of a three-way split was proposed during the first round of public comment proceedings in this docket, as a way to increase the projected effective life of the area code relief that may be ordered in this docket. The use of a three-way split would increase the projected life of 515 area code relief from approximately 8.5 years (for a two-way split or an overlay) to somewhere between 15 and 21 years, effectively doubling the projected time until the next area code relief would be

required. At the same time, however, a three-way split would require that more customers receive new area codes as a result of this docket, compared to a two-way split or an overlay.

In the order taking official notice of the maps, the Board also asked the parties to this docket to respond to certain questions, some of which related to the three maps and some of which concerned more general issues. The parties were given until December 3, 1999, to file their statements.

The Board now finds that it would be useful to conduct three further public comment proceedings to receive statements from the general public regarding the three split proposals, the overlay proposal, and any other options that may be proposed. Accordingly, the Board is scheduling a second round of public meetings for this purpose, using the same format as the Board used in the first round of meetings.

The first four public meetings in this docket were all held in the evening, in Marshalltown, Fort Dodge, Osceola, and Des Moines. For the three meetings now being scheduled, the Board will hold the sessions at different times of day to permit attendance by customers who may have been unable to attend an evening session. The Board will hold the meetings in Ames, Marshalltown, and Des Moines, which are the three largest population centers in each of the area codes that would be created by a three-way split as shown in Attachment C, and which are also located relatively close to the proposed borders of the three-way split.

The Board emphasizes that taking additional public comment concerning the three NANPA maps should not be taken as any indication that the Board is inclined toward any of these options for relief in the 515 area code. The Board will not make any decision regarding the appropriate form of area code relief until all of the evidence has been received. The Board's concern is only for having the best possible record in this docket, and it is likely the record will be improved if the public has an opportunity to comment on the same specific options the Board intends to use as models at the formal hearing on December 14, 1999.

For the same reason, the Board will clarify that these are not the only splits the Board is willing to consider. If any party wishes to propose a different split, the Board will consider it.

Finally, the Board will take this opportunity to acknowledge the withdrawal of Western Wireless Corporation from this docket, pursuant to notice filed on November 8, 1999.

### **ORDERING CLAUSES**

#### **IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:**

1. The withdrawal of Western Wireless Corporation, filed in this docket on November 8, 1999, is acknowledged.
2. Public education and customer comment meetings will be held at each of the following times and locations:

a. December 8, 1999, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Ames Public Library, Founders' Suite, 515 Douglas Avenue, Ames, Iowa.

b. December 9, 1999, beginning at 1 p.m. at the Fisher Community Center auditorium, 709 South Center Street, Marshalltown, Iowa.

c. December 10, 1999, beginning at 9 a.m. in the Oak Room at the Des Moines Botanical Center, 909 East River Drive, Des Moines, Iowa.

The public education and comment hearings will begin with a presentation by Board staff describing the national area code process, the causes of number exhaust, and the range of possible solutions (including the three maps attached to the Board's November 5, 1999, order in this docket). The presentation will be followed by an opportunity for public comment. Individual comment time may be limited if necessary to provide all interested persons with an opportunity to comment within the available meeting time.

**UTILITIES BOARD**

/s/ Allan T. Thoms

/s/ Susan J. Frye

ATTEST:

/s/ Raymond K. Vawter, Jr.      /s/ Diane Munns  
Executive Secretary

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1999.